

**Santa Clara County Workshop
May 8, 2008, 6pm-8pm
Dr. Martin Luther King Library
San Jose, CA**

Some 50 people were in attendance. Commissioner Dean Chu offered introductory remarks. Participants watched a 12-minute video, and then had the opportunity to answer a series of questions via electronic voting. A discussion followed each question, where participants were able to bring up other issues, questions and concerns.

The Three E's

How would you rank these three goals?

	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Economy	39	34.82%
Environment	37	33.04%
Equity	36	32.14%
Totals	112	100%

Maintenance

Which of these should be a higher investment priority for the region's transportation system?

	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Option A: making investments to maintain the existing system of roads, and the existing bus, rail and ferry services in the region	31	68.89%
Option B: making investments to build new roads and add more bus, rail and ferry services in the region	14	31.11%
Totals	45	100%

Comments:

- Option B does not reserve any alternatives to make things better
- Seems logical; if you have a house, you have to maintain it
- I like to see new roads, but not keen on the rest of Option B
- If I lived in SF I would vote for Option A; we live in SJ, we need BART, therefore Option B
- The suburbs will be less and less desirable to live; won't need to maintain the roads there; need more rail
- Measure A said that there would be balanced transportation; if you put all your money into BART, then get an unbalanced system; we only have a small amount of money in Santa Clara County
- Option A is like raising children; can't neglect them after birth
- Bus fleet in VTA is almost the same; 60% of transit riders take the bus, but VTA is cutting services; I want to see decent bus service
- Option A because a lot of things proposed in Option B is a waste of money; we should not invest in BART; should invest in ACE; light rail is much more expensive compared to trolleybuses, such as in SF

- People didn't vote for BART, only for traffic relief now; Measure A was sold as traffic relief
- You said we have \$30 billion to play with; cost of BART now at \$15 billion; how will we fix the rest of the system; we have a light-rail system that works, why not spend money there?
- Eliminate subsidies to the automobiles; implement parking cash-out

How much of our \$30 billion budget should we spend on maintaining our local streets and roads, transit systems and state highways, keeping in mind this sets the stage for how much will be available for other investment categories?

	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Up to 25% (\$7.5 billion)	5	11.90%
Up to 50% (\$15 billion)	21	50%
Up to 75% (\$22.5 billion)	11	26.19%
100% (\$30 billion)	5	11.90%
Totals	42	100%

Comments:

- Can't we revisit past decisions to free up more money for discretionary spending?

Congestion Relief

Which of these should be a higher investment priority for the region's transportation system?	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Option A: Investing in <u>highway</u> system to relieve traffic congestion. (For example, ramp metering, high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes.)	11	23.91%
Option B: Investing in <u>public transit</u> options including rail and buses to provide alternatives to driving.	27	58.7%
Option C: Investing in <u>walking paths and bicycle lanes</u> to provide alternatives to driving.	8	17.39%
Totals	46	100.0%

Comments:

- Option B because we are running out of opportunities to invest in highway systems; as communities get more dense, need better alternatives to get around
- Option B would be the give the biggest bang for the buck
- Not Option C because it doesn't cost too much money; Option B is a bigger thing; there are limited improvements you can do the highway system; by shifting people out of cars and into public transit, can do something for congestion
- Neither Option A or Option C has the slightest chance of being successful; Option B has some potential to be successful, but we're not doing it right
- Public transit works well where there is complete traffic congestion; BART and other rail are segregated; we can do a lot better job by taking HOV lanes as 3 license drivers and putting high-speed buses; buses are much cheaper than anything else; most people have voted for public transit measures with the implicit assumption that they will have a better commute in

their cars; the biggest problem is not how we invest in something large, but how to invest in something small incrementally well

- Mode share for transit is only 2%; we invested a lot in light rail rather than buses; there's no evidence to suggest putting more money in transit will move people into transit; it's not going to happen, this isn't Paris or London
- Option A because if you look at an aerial photo of Santa Clara County, there is huge growth outside of San Jose, including in the mountains; demand on roadway getting higher & higher
- We'll get the high density here eventually; I voted for Option A because a small amount of money could help traffic; can then put the larger sum of money in Option B
- Option C: in my experience, bicycling is faster than public transit; cars are more direct too
- Bicycling is faster than public transit; Option C is by far the most cost-effective option; the fear of being hit by a car is by far the greatest obstacle; it's astonishing we can't build 12 miles of bike trails in 20 years
- During the last 20 years, we spent 80% of our funds in public transit; light rail is 1/5 of 1% of trips; we're not making headway with getting people out of their cars

What do you think is the best way to share the road with trucks?	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Keep trucks out of the peak commuter hours	12	42.86%
Allow smaller trucks to use carpool lanes during congested periods for a fee	2	7.14%
Encourage more cargo deliveries be made by rail or ferries	9	32.14%
Build exclusive truck lanes supported by trucking fees	4	14.29%
Provide more truck parking in commercial business areas	1	3.57%
Totals	28	100%

Focused Growth

Which of these should be a higher investment priority?	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
<u>Option A:</u> Providing more transportation funds to communities that are planning to build more housing along BART and other public transit lines	29	72.50%
<u>Option B:</u> Providing transportation funds evenly to communities regardless of where they are planning to build homes	11	29.50%
Totals	40	100%

Comments:

- Beautiful cities are made from this approach; transportation hubs are great social places
- Transit use with jobs within ½ mile is much higher than if just housing proximity; need a balanced approach to promote both jobs and housing; need to densify jobs; a lot of job sprawl in Santa Clara County
- The concept behind Smart Growth is density around transit; the problem in Santa Clara is the focus is on housing around transit, but there is no retail, no office space; Option A will make the situation worse; homes, retail, commercial, recreation – these are the four key elements

- I agree with the comments of the previous two gentlemen
- We have Tamian tower that's 10-storey high, but it hasn't affected transit ridership
- Option B: it's a matter of economic equity

Access

Transit Subsidy Based on Income: Transit fare discounts are currently given to youth, seniors, and the disabled. In addition to these subsidies, do you think there should be a subsidy for low-income transit riders?

There should be a subsidy for low income riders.	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	11	25%
Agree	11	25%
Neutral	7	15.91%
Disagree	10	22.73%
Strongly Disagree	5	11.36%
Totals	44	100%

Comments:

- I proposed to VTA Board to drop the seniors discount because most seniors are well-off; there will be disproportionate impact on low income communities with toll lanes, etc.
- Low income households typically pay a higher % to housing and transportation than do higher income households; agree with transit subsidy
- Fares for BART and Caltrain are relatively high; the high-tech employees are paid-well; the service workers who work in the same offices also must pay the same fare; there is inequity; the rail fares are priced towards the high-income employees
- Low-income residents need this subsidy to get to the jobs and other services; they do pay a high proportion of income on transportation
- Transit fares should be reduced for everyone; charges on the bus or light rail is not particularly expensive; shouldn't paint with a broad brush with all transit services
- Giving a discount especially during peak periods is really giving a subsidy to employers; this is not the right approach

I favor basing all transit fare subsidies on income rather than age or disability.	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	9	25.71%
Agree	10	28.57%
Neutral	5	14.29%
Disagree	8	22.86%
Strongly Disagree	3	8.57%
Totals	35	100%

Comments:

- There's increasing pressure to take carbon out of the atmosphere; there will be folks who will pay more to get good public transportation
- I'm neutral on this issue; a senior probably doesn't make as much money as someone who is 40 years old
- A lot of low income people work for small businesses; they don't offer commuter checks or other incentives
- Need gasoline tax/fees
- Should have subsidy for youth to train them to use public transit
- Need to hook the kids early otherwise depend on parents as chauffeurs
- The disabled don't have the same freedom to use cars or walk, therefore they need to be considered along with low income people

Emissions Reduction**Which of these should be a higher investment priority?**

	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Option A: Focusing on reducing tailpipe emissions and encouraging alternatives to driving.	34	82.93%
Option B: Improving our ability to drive more easily around the Bay Area.	7	17.07%
Totals	41	100%

Comments:

- One way to encourage emissions reductions is to rip up some freeway lanes and plant some Oleanders to absorb some CO₂
- I drove here from Palo Alto and didn't emit one pound of CO₂; I used an electric car powered by wind power; we need to electrify transportation; cheaper and less polluting
- We're getting some new studies that transit pollute more than do cars; in the near future we'll find Smart Growth pollutes more; taller buildings pollute more
- In the future, cars will be able to drive and park themselves; we will see articles on how good nuclear will be; we will see a huge shift to battery cars powered off the grid from nuclear

Which programs do you think are most effective to reduce the amount of CO₂ emissions?

	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Subsidize purchase of newer/cleaner vehicles	12	37.50%
Provide more/cheaper public transit	5	15.62%
Develop regional awareness campaign to encourage people to reduce fossil fuel use	1	3.12%
Build more bike paths and sidewalks	3	9.38%
Funding incentives to cities to allow more development near transit	6	18.75%
Support local traffic signal timing coordination	5	15.62%
Totals	32	100%

Investment Tradeoffs

You have \$10 – Click each number once for each dollar you want to spend.	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Maintenance	126	32.14%
Congestion Relief	88	22.45%
Focus Growth	69	17.60%
Access	22	5.61%
Emissions Reduction	87	22.19%
Totals	392	100%

New Revenues

Now that we've done the budget, would you favor pursuing new revenues to increase the budget?	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Yes	28	73.68%
No	10	26.32%
Totals	38	100%

Which of the following new revenue sources would you support? (Multiple answers OK)	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Regional gas fee	34	28.33%
Higher bridge toll	15	12.50%
Road tolls	23	19.17%
Vehicle registration fees	23	19.17%
County transportation sales taxes	9	7.50%
Other new revenues	13	10.83%
No new fees or increases	3	2.50%
Totals	120	100%

Open Comments:

County	Comment
Santa Clara	Why does MTC need to deal with CO2 when the state/governor is already doing it?
Santa Clara	How you score projects for priority is key: three measures: amount of dollars per ton of carbon dioxide reduced; amount of dollars per passenger mile; amount of dollars per reduction of driver time; this would help how to evaluate projects; need to consider alternatives, such as BRT; need to be cost-effective with investments
Santa Clara	Outside of SF, the transit use is 2-3%; if you put in all of the projects from T2035, in 2035 what would the transit ridership be? This is a fundamental question. This tells you something; we're not doing things right
Santa Clara	MTC is trying to get people into transit using poor technologies; need to use 21 st century, new technology

Santa Clara	We're inundated with automobile commercials on television; I can't think of anything from MTC or other transit agencies that would convince me to get on transit; it was a huge deal with Caltrain's Baby Bullet; where is the innovation in this plan? How can we ever go beyond 3% transit share?
Santa Clara	Agree with previous two speakers; transit in the Bay Area is reminiscent of 1930's; it's both the use of technology and the approach to how to use the system; I see a lot of buses used here but is not popular in Europe
Santa Clara	I'm in favor of more frequent transit; we should come up with innovate ways to draw people out of their cars
Santa Clara	Need to look at system as a holistic system; just investing in rail is not enough; can I use the public transportation system for all my travel needs? Is it integrated with other cities and systems? How do I develop my lifestyle around public transport rather than the car?
Santa Clara	I believe we can increase transit ridership by improving experience of riding transit; in the North First Street corridor, there are a lot of offices, but you have to cross the street and parking lots to reach the station; how can we complement and enhance our system?
Santa Clara	We haven't gone over the projects; it seems like it's difficult for citizens to comment on projects; there is a huge disincentive to develop new ideas
Santa Clara	Since we're looking at the plan until 2035, we may be looking at \$20/gallon; we need to look at public transport
Santa Clara	We are wasting too much money with so many transit agencies; there shouldn't be more than 10 transit operators in the Bay Area; there should be one ticket system; transit agencies should group-purchase equipment to save money; currently, developed into fiefdoms; the transit operators are huge emitters of emissions (BART uses carbon-based electricity; diesel buses); MTC should be a leader in promoting emissions-free transit, such as solar
Santa Clara	If you encourage more cargo by rail or ferries, this will keep trucks out of the peak commuter hours
Santa Clara	Need comprehensive public transport system in Santa Clara; I want to see light-rail along Highway 85, same with 101 and 280; need to relief congestion; more housing is coming online in the area
Santa Clara	People who are using trucks in the peak periods are folks who are working, making deliveries; in Japan, folks who are commuting to desk jobs take transit; we should be giving trucks priority; in our society, we have prioritized everyone to drive everywhere at anytime; as a public transit customers, you are treated as a second-class person; need to treat transit customers as first-class citizens
Santa Clara	One of the disincentives is the fact that one has to take multiple modes of transit to get to your destination (transfers); you run into schedule conflicts and delays; BART does not sync with Caltrain
Santa Clara	I thought the feedback was just great; will the results of this workshop be available including the voting and comments?
Santa Clara	In this county, BART should be replaced by people movers; automated cars with capacity of 6 or so people
Santa Clara	Our priority for the past 20 years is 80% of funding to transit; this has been the plan for failure; it looks like with this plan, 90% of funds will go to transit; Houston is growing rapidly but congestion has not growth because road capacity has increased; I don't think we should more than 50% on public transit

Written Comments Submitted at Workshop:

Category	County	Comment
Meeting	Santa Clara	These turning point clickers are great
Transit	Santa Clara	We really need BART to downtown SJ ASAP VTA light rail is too slow to be useful for most Need Caltrain baby-bullet service at night If we do build more light rail we should run down San Carlos—Steven's Creek plus Santa Clara St to Alum Rock
Revenue Sources	Santa Clara	We need much higher gas taxes. \$4 per gallon phased in over 10 years
Alternative transportation	Santa Clara	Complete and pave the River Trails Need a pedestrian Bill of Rights, banning closure of sidewalks for construction, push buttons for signals that actually work, etc
Bikes	Santa Clara	We want fast and safe bikeways for commuting. This requires more funding for off-street bike trails. This requires that on every road, reduce the speed limit of the right hand lane to 20mph. (Left lanes can be faster)
Revenue Sources	Santa Clara	Also want toll roads
Smart Growth	Santa Clara	Also want walk-able urban planning
Investment Priorities		The investment priorities should be in the order presented on the yellow sheet: maintenance (most important), congestion relief, focused growth, access, emissions reduction (least important) I also agree with the gentleman who said that the Bay Area has too many transit operators. The 25 transit operators need to be consolidated.
Transit/ Emissions	Santa Clara	To counter a couple of points I heard tonight from a couple people: Even though one bus (and maybe train) pollutes more than one car, when taken in aggregate (all buses and trains vs. all cars together) more pollution comes from the latter, and increasing transit has more potential to decreasing pollution than increasing highway/cars. Also, even though only 2-4% of people use transit now and will with this plan, I believe that's because we have a mostly road-and-highway-based system; in other words it's more because of what's available. We need more investment in public transit to balance the decisions made during the first 2/3 of the 20 th century, when virtually all investments were in roads/highways and buses/trains. So do we want to handle the growth in transportation that we'll need by roads/highways or buses/trains? I would prefer the latter, also because it's better equity—building more highways/roads really only benefits car users.

Demographic Questions Asked at Workshop

1.) How did you get here this evening?	Responses	
Drove	19	45.24%
BART/Muni/Bus	9	21.43%
Carpool	4	9.52%
Bike	3	7.14%
Walked	7	16.67%
Totals	42	100%

2.) How long did it take you to get here?	Responses	
Less than five minutes	3	6.67%
Five to 10 minutes	13	28.89%
Ten to 30 minutes	19	42.22%
More than 30 minutes	10	22.22%
Totals	45	100%

3.) How would you describe yourself?	Responses	
Business Advocate	5	7.25%
Environmental Advocate	13	18.84%
Community Advocate	7	10.14%
Government/Agency Staff	12	17.39%
Concerned Individual	25	36.23%
Social Justice Advocate	4	5.80%
Elected Official	3	4.35%
Totals	69	100%

4.) How did you hear about tonight's meeting?	Responses	
Flyer	15	34.88%
Website	3	6.98%
Email	18	41.86%
Other	7	16.28%
Totals	43	100%

5.) Do you use public transportation regularly? (one to two times a week)	Responses	
Yes	27	60%
No	18	40%
Totals	45	100%

6.) Have you attended a public meeting or workshop on Bay Area transportation in the past?

	Responses	
Yes	39	90.70%
No	4	9.30%
Totals	43	100%

7.) What County do you live in?

	Responses	
Alameda	2	4.55%
Contra Costa	0	0%
Marin	0	0%
Napa	0	0%
San Francisco	2	4.55%
San Mateo	3	6.82%
Santa Clara	37	84.09%
Solano	0	0%
Sonoma	0	0%
Totals	44	100%

8.) What is your gender?

	Responses	
Male	37	86.05%
Female	6	13.95%
Totals	43	100%

9.) Are you Hispanic/Latino?

	Responses	
Yes	5	11.63%
No	38	88.37%
Totals	43	100%

10.) How do you identify yourself (click all that apply)

	Responses	
White	35	67.31%
Chinese	4	7.69%
Vietnamese	0	0%
Asian/Indian	1	1.92%
Black/African American	2	3.85%
Japanese	0	0%
Filipino	0	0%
American Indian/Alaskan	3	5.77%
Other Asian	0	0%
Other Race	7	13.46%
Totals	52	100%

11.) What is your age?	Responses	
24 years and under	1	2.22%
Between 25 and 59	32	71.11%
Over 60	12	26.67%
Totals	45	100%

Meeting Evaluation Questions Asked at Workshop:

36.) I had the opportunity to provide comments.	Responses	
Strongly Agree	21	58.33%
Agree	14	38.89%
Neutral	1	2.78%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Totals	36	100%

37.) I found the meeting useful and informative.	Responses	
Strongly Agree	10	27.03%
Agree	21	56.76%
Neutral	3	8.11%
Disagree	1	2.70%
Strongly Disagree	2	5.41%
Totals	37	100%

38.) I gained a better understanding of other people's perspectives.	Responses	
Strongly Agree	9	24.32%
Agree	21	56.76%
Neutral	6	16.22%
Disagree	1	2.70%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Totals	37	100%

39.) The information presented was clear and had an appropriate level of detail.	Responses	
Strongly Agree	4	12.50%
Agree	14	43.75%
Neutral	7	21.88%
Disagree	7	21.88%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Totals	32	100%

40.) A quality discussion of key issues took place.	Responses	
Strongly Agree	2	6.06%
Agree	20	60.61%

Neutral	6	18.18%
Disagree	3	9.09%
Strongly Disagree	2	6.06%
Totals	33	100%

**41.) I learned more about transportation planning
in the Bay Area by participating tonight.**

Responses

Strongly Agree	2	6.25%
Agree	12	37.50%
Neutral	10	31.25%
Disagree	6	18.75%
Strongly Disagree	2	6.25%
Totals	32	100%

**42.) There were no barriers (language or other)
that prevented me from participating.**

Responses

Strongly Agree	20	55.56%
Agree	11	30.56%
Neutral	3	8.33%
Disagree	2	5.56%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Totals	36	100%